



WHITESTOWN MUNICIPAL COMPLEX

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For Immediate Release:

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ANNIVERSARY OF LINCOLN FUNERAL TRAIN THROUGH WHITESTOWN

Town Commemorates 150th anniversary of Historic 1865 Procession

WHAT: Town administration and Parks Department officials will gather at the site where the train carrying President Abraham Lincoln's body passed through on its way from Washington D.C. to Springfield, IL in 1865. (Presidents Lincoln's Inaugural Train also took him through Whitestown on its way from Springfield to D.C. in 1861.)

That historic rail corridor, which once carried the Indianapolis & Lafayette Railroad, is the future site of the Farm Heritage Trail, now under construction. The walking/biking path is currently being built between Lebanon and Zionsville, and will eventually connect to the Monon trail. Once the trail is complete, a plaque will commemorate the site where the President's body passed through Whitestown.

Albert S. White, for whom Whitestown was named, was the president of the Indianapolis & Lafayette Railroad. White was a leading abolitionist and a United States Senator, and was appointed to a select federal commission by President Abraham Lincoln.

WHY: To mark the somber anniversary in American history. The train, called The United States, was originally built to be the railroad version of today's Air Force One, yet Lincoln never rode the train while alive. He refused to ride it during the Civil War, saying he didn't want to appear to be wasting taxpayer dollars during the costly war. Ironically, he was scheduled to inspect the train for the first time on April 15th, 1865, but he was shot the night before, on April 14th, 1865. Immediately after his assassination, it was converted to The Lincoln Funeral Train, with furniture removed to make room for the 16th President's casket. It traveled more than 1,600 miles carrying Lincoln's body for nearly two weeks, with more than three million people

gathering along the tracks to pay their respects. Formal funerals were held in 12 major cities along the route. All along the way from D.C. to Springfield, arches were built over the tracks and draped in black. It has been called the grandest funeral spectacle in U.S. history.

WHEN: 10am, Friday, May 1st, 2015 - the 150th anniversary of the Lincoln Funeral Train's passage through Whitestown. The train originally passed through around 1:07am on May 1st, 1865. About 100 people gathered around a single campfire to watch the train pass. To commemorate the somber and historic event, a steam train whistle will be blown followed by a moment of silence. A professional Abraham Lincoln impersonator will be there to answer questions about Lincoln's life and death. Town leaders will provide interviews about the Farm Heritage Trail project and the future permanent memorial planned.

WHERE: Between 103 & 105 S. Main Street, Whitestown, IN
(between the Masonic Lodge and the Pizza King & American Legion buildings on the east side of Main St.) To our knowledge, this will be the only commemoration event in Boone County.

Fast Facts:

- Whitestown is the fastest growing community in Indiana
- A population of about 3,000 in 2010 has swelled to about 5,500 residents, with the projected population expected to be about 12,000 residents by the next census in 2020

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